

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 12535

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINR, CU, AO, BE
SUBJECT: CUBA: VIEWS OF BELGIAN AMBASSADOR IN HAVANA

REF: BRUSSELS 6496

SUMMARY: DURING EXTENDED CONVERSATION WITH VICTOR ALLARD,
BELGIAN AMBASSADOR TO CUBA, AMBASSADOR ALLARD MADE THE
FOLLOWING POINTS. END SUMMARY.

1. CUBA'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS - FIDEL CASTRO'S
CONDUCT IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS WILL BE IN GREAT
PART DETERMINED FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE BY HIS
ROLE AS HOST OF 1979 NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE TO BE
HELD IN HAVANA. HIS EXISTING PENCHANT FOR THIRD
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WORLD ROLES AND POSTURES FAR BEYOND THE CONFINES OF
THE CARIBBEAN OR THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE WILL BE
THUS REINFORCED, BUT HE WILL PROBABLY BECOME A TRIFLE
MORE MODERATE BECAUSE OF THIS ADDED LEADERSHIP
RESPONSIBILITY.

2. RELATIONS WITH THE US - AMBASSADOR ALLARD DID NOT THINK CASTRO WOULD BE IN ANY HURRY TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES, EVEN AFTER THE CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION IN WASHINGTON. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE SAID THAT CUBA DESPERATELY NEEDS U.S. TECHNOLOGY AND HARD CURRENCY (BECAUSE OF LOW SUGAR PRICES), AND THIS ECONOMIC REALITY COULD CAUSE CASTRO TO REEVALUATE HIS POSITION.

3. ANGOLA AND REST OF AFRICA - AMBASSADOR ALLARD DOES NOT SEE CUBA AS A TOOL OF USSR IN ANGOLA OR IN REST OF AFRICA. HE VIEWS CASTRO AS OBSESSED WITH PLAYING WORLD ROLE WITH NO SIGNIFICANT POWER AND FEW RESOURCES; THEREFORE, HE PLAYS WITH THE ONLY THINGS HE HAS: HIS AUDACIOUS REVOLUTIONARY STYLE AND SYMBOLISM. ALLARD SAID HE THOUGHT CASTRO WAS SEEKING A ROLE IN RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA.

4. NATO AND EC-9 COORDINATION ON CUBA - AMBASSADOR ALLARD WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT HIS NATO AND EC-9 COLLEAGUES IN HAVANA DID NOT STAY IN CLOSER TOUCH AND EXCHANGE VIEWS - EITHER FORMALLY OR INFORMALLY - ON CUBAN DEVELOPMENTS. HE HAS RECOMMENDED THIS A NUMBER OF TIMES AND WILL CONTINUE TO WORK TOWARDS THIS GOAL. HE SAID THAT HE HAS CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH CARLOS RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ AND WOULD BE IN IDEAL POSITION TO CONVEY EC-9, NATO - OR EVEN U.S. - VIEWS TO CUBAN LEADERSHIP.

5. AMBASSADOR ALLARD WILL RETURN TO BRUSSELS FROM HAVANA AT END OF JANUARY FOR MEETING OF BELGIAN-CUBAN
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JOINT COMMISSION SET UP DURING MINISTER OF FOREIGN
TRADE TOUSSAINT'S VISIT TO HAVANA LAST JUNE (REFTEL).
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